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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-fifth year

Identical letters dated 20 August 2010 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I regret to inform you of ongoing and intensifying acts of violence and terrorism being perpetrated by illegal Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and their properties in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

More than half a million Israeli settlers have been illegally transferred by Israel, the occupying Power, to the more than 144 settlements and over 100 so-called "outposts" that have been illegally constructed in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in Occupied East Jerusalem. Many of these settlers are armed, militant and radical, espousing extremist views and positions in rejection of the very presence and existence of the Palestinian people.

The continuing and escalating acts of violence, lawlessness and terror being perpetrated by such radical Israeli settlers include, but have not been limited to, the beating and killing of Palestinian civilians, including children, the torching of fields and orchards, the uprooting of olive trees, the vandalizing and torching of homes and vehicles, the throwing of stones, the desecration of mosques and cemeteries, the pollution of the water supply, and the harassment and humiliation of Palestinians. In the recent period, many such acts have been carried out by settlers as part of a so-called "price-tag" policy in rejection of any attempts to freeze settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in East Jerusalem. In addition, typically such illegal actions by Israeli settlers are perpetrated in full view of the Israeli occupying forces, who continue to fail to impose law and order upon these radical settlers or to hold them accountable for their crimes.

In this regard, I must draw your attention to the following illegal, brutal actions committed by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and their properties in the current time period:

- 18 July 2010: a young Palestinian boy, Abdullah Al-Mohtasib, aged 11, was hit by a settler on a speeding motorcycle in the Old City of Al-Khalil (Hebron).

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- 21 July 2010: settlers stole sheep from a young Palestinian shepherd in the village of Tuba south of Al-Khalil (Hebron).
- 22 July 2010: settlers set fire to olive trees in Saffa village near Ramallah, burning more than 7 square kilometres of land and trees. When villagers and firefighters tried to put out the inferno, the Israeli occupying forces refused to allow them to access the land.
- 26 July 2010: settlers stoned Palestinians near the West Bank city of Nablus and set fire to olive trees in an orchard in Burin village.
- 29 July 2010: settlers stormed a building in the Old City of East Jerusalem and evicted three Palestinian families from their homes, resulting in the displacement and homelessness of 50 people, including children.
- 30 July 2010: settlers caused damage to a vegetable field in Um Al-Khair village in southern Al-Khalil (Hebron), slashed water pipes and destroyed fencing. The damaged field was the primary food and economic resource for the Bedouin families living there.
- 30 July 2010: settlers attacked Burin village, setting fire to land and trees, and broke into a home which was under construction and tried to demolish it.
- 6 August 2010: settlers set fire to hundreds of dunums of farmland in the northern West Bank village of Beit Furik. That same day, settlers in the Al-Buwayra area east of Al-Khalil (Hebron) attacked and assaulted a Palestinian woman, Suzan Sultan, aged 51, causing multiple injuries to her head and body for which she required medical treatment. In addition, settlers attacked two international peace activists from Canada and Denmark who had been in Al-Buwayra, beating them with metal poles and wooden sticks and stealing their passports and cameras.
- 8 August 2010: settlers attacked a Palestinian bus in an area near an illegal settlement south of Nablus, shattering the windows of the bus.
- 15 August 2010: settlers in Al-Khalil (Hebron) attacked and beat a 10-year-old Palestinian girl, Inas Mazen Qaaqour, who had to be hospitalized for treatment of her wounds. On that same day, an Israeli military jeep struck an 8-year-old Palestinian boy also in Al-Khalil.

In addition to these acts of violence and depravity by Israeli settlers, Israel also flagrantly continues to construct and expand in the West Bank, including in and around East Jerusalem, in breach of international law and in defiance of the international calls and appeals for a full cessation of settlement activities in the Palestinian land occupied by Israel since 1967. Recently plans for expansion in eight illegal settlements were revealed in addition to plans for the establishment of a new settlement in the northern West Bank. Moreover, earlier this month, the occupying Power approved the construction of 40 new settlement units in the illegal settlement of "Pisgat Ze'ev" in Occupied East Jerusalem.

Israel also continues with its illegal policy of demolition of Palestinian homes and eviction of Palestinian families in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Israeli occupying forces in July and August 2010 have demolished all the structures in Al-Farsiya village near Tubas in the northern Jordan Valley rendering Palestinian residents homeless. According to *B'Tselem*, the

Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights, Israel "allows the settlements established in the Jordan Valley to build extensively, and even restorative construction carried out without permits".

This blatant, relentless colonization of the Palestinian land has been perpetrated by the occupying Power in grave breach of the relevant provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Ongoing settlement construction, expansion and transfer of Israeli settlers also constitute direct and serious violations of numerous Security Council resolutions as well as of obligations undertaken by Israel under the Quartet road map.

Moreover, in this regard, settlement activities and Israeli settler violence, lawlessness and terror against Palestinian civilians and properties in the Occupied Palestinian Territory remain a source of great tension, threatening to further destabilize the fragile situation on the ground and negatively impacting the resumption of the peace process between the two parties as it has consistently done in the past.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 372 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 13 July 2010 (A/ES-10/497-S/2010/379) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations